# Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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*"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!*
*Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;*
*And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."*

JOHN HAY.

## On Picket Duty.

And now we are seven. The "Alarm," of London, has adopted the new typography. When there are ten, we will make a cross.

Time was when a man of brains and culture found less to offend and more to please in the columns of the "Sun" and the "Evening Post" than in those of any other New York daily newspapers. *Corruptio optimi pessima.*

The Secularists of the United States so bitterly criticised Colonel Ingersoll for his utterances on the stump in the recent campaign that he canceled his engagement to take part in the Secularist congress in Chicago. S. P. Putnam, in commenting on this at the congress, lamented that there are so many people who are unwilling that others shall think for themselves. His remark was directed against Ingersoll's critics, but it really hit Ingersoll himself. Most of Ingersoll's campaigning was carried on in Illinois. Now, the issue that took precedence of every other in that State was the success or defeat of John P. Altgeld in his candidacy for a second term as governor. The principal event of his administration had been the striking of the bravest blow for the freedom to think that has ever been struck in America. Colonel Ingersoll, who has always put freedom to think ahead of every other question, did his utmost to defeat John P. Altgeld. In so doing he proved that he is one of the "many who are unwilling that others shall think for themselves." Mr. Putnam, in his remarks at Chicago, fired a good shot at the wrong target.

It is not quite a year ago that I was told by Mr. Yarros in these columns, in his criticism of my attitude on the Venezuelan question, that, "if England is unwilling to submit the entire dispute to arbitration, it is manifestly because no other nation would do what she is urged to do. No self-respecting nation would submit to the dictatorial demands of Cleveland's message." I demonstrated to Mr. Yarros in my answer that even at that time England had virtually backed down. Almost a year has been consumed in the endeavor to effect that backdown as gracefully as the embarrassing circumstances would permit. Now the step has been taken. Salisbury, who at first absolutely refused to submit the territory within the Schomburgk line to arbitration, has now consented to such submission, and has done it in obedience to Cleveland's "dictatorial demand." In the language of "A Leading Publicist," writing in the London "Speaker," "what had to be done had to be done, and that is the long and the short of it. We may not like it, but there ought to be no difficulty in choosing between the absurdity of complaining over the inevitable and the dignity of smiling acquiescence." I presume that Mr. Yarros no longer considers England a self-respecting nation.

An agency for Liberty and all books and pamphlets published from Liberty's office has been opened with Murdoch & Co., 26 Paternoster Square, London. Patrons in Great Britain and on the continent will do well to make note of this, as it is probable that they can save time by ordering of the London house.

It turns out that I did a grave injustice to Mr. Arthur Wastall, the editor of "Natural Food," in attributing to him a disposition to wilfully ignore Liberty's claim to credit for the new typography. He declares most positively that he did not know that such credit was due. I unreservedly accept his disclaimer, and offer him my sincere apology, regretting that I allowed myself to act upon circumstantial evidence, even though it was so strong as to seem almost tantamount to proof.

Some months ago the "Truth Seeker" discarded hand-composition, and introduced the linotype into its printing-office. In the full flush of its pride and with a patronizing air it forthwith declared, through the pen of one of its editors, Mr. George E. Macdonald, that Liberty's abolition of "justification" in typesetting would have been a most glorious and valuable improvement, had it appeared earlier in the world's history, but that, coming contemporaneously with the linotype, which "justifies" automatically, its inventor must share the fate of those martyrs who arrive too late. Now note the brief and inglorious sequel. After a few months' use the "Truth Seeker" has thrown its linotypes into the scrap-heap, and the merry click of the types is heard once more in its printing-office as nimble fingers rattle them into vindicated composing-sticks. Every Thursday, when the paper arrives, I hurriedly remove the wrapper, expecting to see the ragged edge, and to learn thereby that the "Truth Seeker" has joined the noble army of martyrs who are in season. But with each week's disappointment my hope grows fainter. I remember that there are two Macdonalds, and I begin to fear that Belle-Plante has clipped the wings of Cornelius. Well, at any rate, the "Truth Seeker" has for once got near enough to the object of its search to know that "Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again." P. S.—I learn from good authority that the Mergenthalers broke down under pressure of the learned "Truth Seeker's" vocabulary. I once heard a Japanese maiden say to a man who was taking advantage of the limitations of her English to abuse her in polysyllabic language resembling that with which Sheridan silenced the fishwife: "You talk too heavy." That was the trouble between the Macdonalds and the Mergenthalers. The talk was too heavy.

I desire to notify all friends of mine who read the daily newspapers that I have not lost my mental balance. The caution is necessary, because fears as to my sanity are doubtless entertained by such of them as are aware that the daily newspapers tell the truth only in exceptional cases, just to prove the rule that they are liars. On the morning after Governor Altgeld's speech in Cooper Union it was stated in the various reports descriptive of that event, appearing not only in New York dailies, but in the telegraphic columns of journals throughout the country, that Benj. R. Tucker sat on the platform; that he was recognized as he entered the hall; that he was cheered during the evening; and that he stood in the front row and waved a flag. In none of these statements is there any truth; for none of them is there a shred or a shadow of foundation. I went to the Altgeld meeting as a simple auditor; not once did I set foot on the platform; neither as I entered the hall or at any other time was a voice raised or a hand lifted in my honor; I took a seat not far from the middle of the hall, and remained throughout the evening buried in a compact throng of enthusiastic men and women; and, far from waving a flag either in the front row or elsewhere, I was almost the only person present who did not wave a flag. In fact, I did not even have a flag in my hand once during the evening, save for a single second, when a good Single-Tax woman seated beside me thrust one upon me, which I straightway handed back to her with the remark: "You must remember that I *am* an Anarchist"; the remark being intended to distinguish myself from the flag-waving throng, which was made up for the most part of people who are not Anarchists, but who are called such by the press. And even this incident was entirely quiet and private, known to only my Single-Tax friend and myself. The matter is of small consequence, but is worth correcting, first, to prevent anyone from thinking that I have entered into politics, and, second, to indicate, by a trivial instance, the utter recklessness and wilfulness with which Republican editors and reporters lied throughout the late campaign.

# Liberty.

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"*In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel.*" — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

## The Illusions of G. B. S.

G. Bernard Shaw's lately-printed essay on "The Illusions of Socialism" is, of course, extremely clever and readable. He divides illusions into necessary ones and flattering ones, useful and mischievous, good and foolish. No movement, he says, could succeed without illusions, for the average man must be bribed to pay the least attention to things that do not directly appeal to his passions. Socialism as pure science, as scientific politics, would interest but a few; to enlist the sympathetic concern of the many, the truth must be presented in attractive guise. Let us assume the truth of this theory, and test it by applying it to Mr. Shaw himself. As he is not an ordinary man, the theory would lead us to expect to find him free of all illusions, and perfectly ready and able to look reality in the face and accept truth without any mask or adornment. We shall see, however, that Mr. Shaw has his full quota of illusions, and that his greatest illusion is his complacent assumption that his illusions are demonstrated scientific facts.

But first a remark or two on a rather significant admission made by Mr. Shaw. He says in all seriousness:

> It will be admitted without argument that Socialism, if it is to gain serious attention nowadays, must come into the field as political science and not as sentimental dogma. It is true that it is founded on sentimental dogma, and is quite unmeaning and purposeless apart from it. But so are all modern democratic political systems.

Mr. Shaw does not specify what the fundamental dogma of Socialism is, and we cannot but regret this omission. But to say that that which is founded on sentimental dogma is "political science" is something which no truly scientific thinker would tolerate with any degree of patience. Science starts out with certain assumptions, it is true, but they are invariably assumptions which the human mind finds itself compelled to make, and the negation of which is absolutely inconceivable. No other dogmas are admitted by science, and the acceptance of any gratuitous and superfluous dogma is fatal to one's pretensions to scientific authority. If Socialism sets out with a sentimental dogma, it is unscientific and doomed, just as other modern democratic political systems are unscientific and foredoomed to failure.

If Socialism started out with the dogma of the fatherhood of God, would Mr. Shaw regard it is scientific, and refer to the fact that other systems have not their dogmas? Clearly not, and yet he assures us that Socialism is scientific, notwithstanding a basic dogma left unspecified. For my part, I utterly deny the necessity of any such dogmas, and hold that any political system which is founded on them is not scientific or deserving of serious consideration.

Now for Mr. Shaw's illusions. Explaining the relation between Socialism and democracy, he writes:

> It has been discovered that the dominant factor in human society is not political organization, but industrial organization; and that to secure to the people control of the political organization, whilst letting the industrial organization slip through their fingers, is to intensify slavery under the political forms and pretensions of freedom and equality. In short, unless the government controls industry, it is useless for the people to control the government.
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> When this became plain, the Manchester school was superseded by the Collectivist or Socialist school; and democracy became social democracy, their objects being the regulation, and finally the proprietorship, organization, and control of industry by the State. Now, it is to be observed that we have no recantation or revision of the dogmas of the American constitution. Democracy still pursues happiness, and strains after wider life and liberty; and it still disregards the teachings of asceticism and pessimism. And Socialism is quite on the side of democracy,—quite agrees that the system it proposes must stand or fall by its success in making the people livelier, freer, and happier than they can be without it. Consequently Socialism is not distinguishable on its dogmatic side from the older-fashioned democracy, republicanism, radicalism, or liberalism, or even from English conservatism, which no longer pretends to be the organ of a class as against the people, and which is, in fact, more advanced practically than German social democracy. The sole distinction lies in its contention that industrial collectivism is the true political science of democracy.

Can there be a greater and stranger illusion than to regard this jargon as "scientific"? In the first place, what does Mr. Shaw mean by "democracy"? The term is used in a larger sense by men like Morley, and in a narrow and technical one by writers like Lecky, Sir Henry Maine, and others. If Mr. Shaw means "popular government," majority rule, as contradistinguished from the rule of one or a few, it is surely absurd for him to assume that democracy is an established and permanent system which no longer needs any defence or apology. Socialism, he says, is on the side of democracy. Then Socialism assumes the burden of justifying democracy. There are people, as Mr. Shaw knows, who look upon democracy as political superstition,—who claim that it is philosophically and scientifically as revolting and impudent as any of the systems which prevailed in the past. Mr. Shaw brushes aside the objections of individualists like Spencer and Anarchists like Proudhon, and he does so simply because he is laboring under as gross and comical a delusion as the conceited illusion which permits a partisan to treat his opponent as a moral delinquent and imbecile. Democracy is on trial, and Mr. Shaw is blind to the fact. He is blinded by his illusion.

The second "conceited illusion" of Mr. Shaw is his notion that Socialism is an improved and enlarged and rationalized edition of democracy. He tells us that democracy has failed to yield happiness and harmony, because industrial organization has been neglected and abandoned to individualism. But Mr. Shaw knows that there are many who deny that the failure of Manchesterism implies the failure of liberty,—who contend that the remedy for the evils in the present system is found in greater freedom, in more consistent individualism than the Manchesterian. Mr. Shaw knows this, but he ignores it. He complacently assumes that the only alternative to Manchesterism is Socialism, and that political science backs him up in that assumption.

Is there anything scientific in the meaningless talk about the control of industry by the government? What is a government under democracy? A set of politicians elected by a majority of the voters. Of course these politicians can control nothing, if those who elect them have no authority to dictate to the minority. As a utilitarian Mr. Shaw admits no criterion other than the greatest amount of happiness of the greatest number of people, and, whether or no Socialism, or the dictation in all industrial and commercial matters of the majority through its agents is conducive to greater happiness than a system of economic Anarchy is certainly far from being a settled question. The average man does not believe it, because he is ignorant, while the competent disagree, and there is, from an impartial and abstract point of view, just as much reason for saying that Anarchy is the next step in social evolution as that Socialism is. Mr. Shaw mistakes assertions for demonstrations and emphasis for theoretical strength. The most debatable propositions are laid down by him in a manner permissible only to the framers of maxims and universally-accepted truths. What but illusion is responsible for this?

Mr. Shaw will have to revise his theory. He has accounted for the illusions of the average Philistine, but he has failed to account for the illusions of so able and acute and witty thinkers and writers as G. B. S. V. Y.

## Anarchists in Politics.

No question seems to be simpler at first blush than that of the proper attitude of Anarchists toward political struggles. Absolute non-participation is obviously the clear deduction, the inevitable corollary from the general Anarchistic philosophy. Yet so much human nature is there even in Anarchists that during exciting and stormy campaigns abstract principles are easily lost sight of by many, and some uncertainty is felt with regard to the propriety of holding entirely aloof. Of course, no difficulty arises when all of the contending parties are equally bad and reactionary, or when such superiority as one of the parties may have refers to a matter in which no particular interest is felt. But when class feeling runs high, and one's sympathies and antipathies are aroused, he is tempted to make an exception to the rule of rigid abstention, and to "go into politics" for the occasion.

A friend and reader of Liberty recently put this query to me: When some practical, immediate good can be accomplished by the election of a particular man or the victory of a particular party, is it not the part of wisdom and propriety for the most determined opponent of government and politics to aid and abet such election? Admitting that but little good can be accomplished in and through politics, should not that little be secured by temporary excursions into practical partisan affairs?

Now, the first thing to remark concerning this problem is that it overlooks the fact that the Anarchists themselves are a political party fighting for political ends. They have a platform and are "enlisted for the war," employing such methods as seem to them most efficacious and best adapted to the objects in view. Surely it is not without reason that ordinary political methods have been abjured by them, and surely it is no new or surprising discovery, originally neglected, that occasionally some good can be accomplished by political action. The real question is whether the immediate and practical good which, by our hypothesis, can be secured is not overbalanced by indirect and remote injury to the essential aims and purposes of Anarchism. Answer this question in the negative, and all reasons for boycotting politics vanish. It is to be borne in mind that there are no other considerations than utilitarian ones to be considered. Anarchists have no religious or moral objection to voting and party warfare, and, although they regret the fundamental principle of government and insist on doing away with all coercion of the non-invasive, they would not deem it ethically improper to use the ballot (which means aggression) for the purpose of furthering the cause of freedom. Were it expedient and profitable, they would not hesitate to do as the Romans do, and govern themselves by the ethical and political standards of their age. This is not because the end justifies the means, but because, from the rational and evolutionary point of view, we are entitled to use the ideas and sentiments of the present as a stepping-stone to higher ideas and sentiments.

Here the fundamental difference between the Tolstoi philosophy and the utilitarian view plainly emerges. Coercion, government, legal violence, says Tolstoi, are sinful and ungodly, and hence the man who in any way countenances or identifies himself with these things is guilty of immorality. That which is sinful today was sinful two thousand years ago, and the sinners of the past and present are equally guilty. The scientific view, on the other hand, is that the ethical propriety of men's acts must be determined by the requirements and possibilities of the situation. In addition to the absolutely right, as Spencer would put it, there is the relatively right. We may think that society is ready to relinquish government altogether, and that the greatest happiness would now be secured by the complete observance of equal freedom; but the fact is that society, through ignorance or inertia, adheres to governmentalism, and we must abolish this evil as gradually and slowly as popular intelligence permits. In enlarging men's freedom, in diminishing the amount of governmental coercion, we may, without impropriety, use the political methods in vogue. It is not inconsistent to use government to abolish government, to invoke majority rule for the purpose of weakening and restricting the power of the majority.

The real question is whether this policy is safe and successful from the standpoint of what may be called Anarchistic politics. If more can be accomplished by holding aloof from party activity, by carrying on a strictly Anarchistic propaganda and declining to have anything to do with existing government agencies, by boycotting politics, in short, then it is manifestly reactionary and unwise to neglect the work of greater utility and importance for the sake of work of lesser utility. There are plenty of conservatives to attend to conservative work, plenty of moderate reformers to do the work called for by the moderate platforms, and it is essential that those who have their own distinctive, and peculiar, and special mission should concentrate their energies on that mission. The real question is not whether Anarchists can properly help free-traders to obtain free trade, or anti-monopolists of any kind to secure the repeal of a special law establishing a given monopoly, but whether they can do this without sacrificing larger and greater interests.

Theoretically, it is possible to conceive and approve of the following attitude: Let Anarchists promulgate their platform in full, and emphasize at all times the fact that they seek to abolish government altogether; and let them, in addition to their present methods of propaganda and activity, go into politics and coöperate with the more progressive elements, helping them to secure such minor reforms in the direction of liberty as they may from time to time put forward as practical issues. But what if this policy would, in actual practice, lead to the obscuration and obliteration and disappearance of Anarchism as a force in the larger political life? The answer is self-evident. Now, it is upon the hypothesis that this would be the inevitable result that abstention from and the systematic boycotting of party politics has been insisted on by the Anarchists.

Of course, abstention does not prevent them from expressing sympathy with progressive politicians and making war upon the more objectionable type. They can applaud the effort to secure free trade without voting and working for free-trade candidates. But, my correspondent objects, suppose that it actually depended on a single vote, or on the vote of an Anarchistic group, whether a congressional majority favorable to a free-trade bill should be elected or not; suppose that they had it absolutely in their power to decide, by throwing their political influence on the right side, whether the country should have free banking or the perpetuation of the present financial system: what would you advise?

Such a situation is logically not inconceivable, and it is natural that the question should occur to one. It seems to me, however, that no general answer can be given. Temperament would govern in each individual case. I think *I* should vote in the case supposed, but I am not at all sure that Mr. Tucker would. Where the gain is so palpable, direct, immediate, and certain, and the loss remote and indirect, the behavior of any individual Anarchist would depend on the vividness of his imagination, the intensity of his feelings, the bent of his mind. Some would unhesitatingly make an exception to their general rule, while others would adhere to the rule.

In saying that I should vote under the peculiar circumstances supposed, I do not intend to convey the impression that I should consider myself inconsistent. My belief in guiding principles is as firm as ever, my distrust of "exceptional cases" as profound as ever. But, as I have indicated above, non-participation in politics is not enjoined by any high ethical principle; it is simply, in my judgment, a necessary condition of successful Anarchistic propaganda under ordinary circumstances. In an extraordinary situation the very interest of Anarchism might call for different behavior. V. Y.

## Henry George, Traitor.

The present oft recalls the past, and events of the recent political campaign forcibly reminded me of the shame of 1887 and the shameful part therein of one whose infamy shall not be forgotten. To the end that it may not, I purpose here to link the present to the past by a simple statement of facts.

In May, 1886, occurred the now historic tragedy of the Chicago Haymarket, when a bomb was thrown and policemen were killed and wounded. It is needless to review the details. As a result eight men—Spies, Parsons, Fischer, Engel, Lingg, Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe—were arrested, tried, and convicted of murder. All but Neebe were condemned to death; Neebe was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. The trial was a long one, and after it months were occupied in attempts to secure a new one and to save the lives of the condemned. During the spring, summer, and fall of 1887 the matter filled the public mind. Public opinion, inflamed by a prostituted press and cowards high in place, was at fever-pitch against the victims. Efforts were made to secure the intervention of influential persons in their behalf. But few responded to the call. Perhaps most notable among the few, because he risked the most and because his aid was least expected, was William Dean Howells. However brilliant the literary fame that he may leave behind him, his fame as a man, resting chiefly on the brave and simple appeal that he then made for justice, will far outshine it, and I am sure that to him this act is the most precious of his career. But because he was almost alone among the mighty his appeal was vain. The supreme court of Illinois, in a long and labored opinion, sustained the verdict of the lower court; the supreme court of the United States gave an adverse decision regarding the points of law upon which an appeal to that tribunal had been taken; the governor of Illinois listened with ears of stone to all prayers for clemency; and on November Eleventh, Eighteen Hundred and Eighty-Seven, Lingg having previously taken his own life, Spies, Parsons, Fischer, and Engel were hanged, the commutation of the sentences of Fielden and Schwab to life-imprisonment being the only crumb of comfort flung to an enlightened minority hungering for justice.

Among the mighty in that day of trial, in that hour of national dishonor when every individual, especially every individual of prominence, had to choose between the path of

shame and the path of glory, it is not unfair to include Mr. Henry George. A man of unquestioned ability; a writer of almost unparalleled lucidity and force; a public speaker whom vast audiences acclaimed with apparently unquenchable enthusiasm; a reformer who, in completely winning the love of the masses, had not failed to attach himself to many men of wealth and power among the classes; and, withal, a man whose honesty only a few of the more clear-sighted had then begun to doubt,—to him perhaps more than to any other single person did lovers of liberty and friends of labor confidently look for willing and effective aid and leadership through and out of a crisis pregnant with results beyond all human vision. Less than a year before, he had astonished New York and the entire nation by rolling up a vote of 68,000 as an independent candidate for the mayoralty of this city. With the prestige that that event had given him, with his command of popular attention, and with his wonderful power of advocacy, it was not impossible that he should turn the tide of opinion, and compel authority to comply with the demand of a people awakened by his voice to a realization of the horror that was impending. At the very least he could have tried. For the hope that he would make the attempt he had given reason—so it is said, though I cannot vouch for the statement—by sending a message of encouragement to the men in their cells at Chicago. That at the time this message is said to have been sent he believed them to be innocent victims is on record in black and white over his own signature. At that time he had not been nominated for the office of secretary of State for New York. This nomination came to him some months later,—in the summer or early fall of 1887. His remarkable campaign of 1886 had inspired him with insane hopes of speedy political victory. In January, 1887, he had started his weekly paper, the "Standard," and by this and other means he was bending all his energies to the creation of a new political issue in the Single Tax with himself as standard-bearer of a new political party. He claimed that he would poll 250,000 votes for secretary of State, and that with hard work he could be elected. The month of September, 1887, found him in the thick of this mad campaign. It was in that month, too, that the Illinois supreme court filed its opinion sustaining the verdict against Spies and his comrades. The time for action had arrived. Appeals to Henry George began to pour in upon him from friends of the condemned men and from readers of the "Standard." He was in a dilemma,—one of those embarrassing dilemmas which men afflicted with the political itch have so often to confront. What should he do? Should he spring to the side of these innocent victims, upon whose fate turned the question of free speech in America, and thereby absolutely ruin his prospect of immediate political advancement, or should he continue in his mad struggle to attain the goal of his ambition, and leave the innocent to die? For some weeks he doggedly maintained a policy of silence. But the demand that he should take a stand became too loud to be ignored. And it was under this pressure that at last, in the "Standard" of October 8, 1887, appeared on its first page, over the signature of the editor himself, the article that at once damned Henry George forever in the eyes of every decent and unbiassed man. In substance Mr. George declared that, although he formerly looked upon the condemned men as innocent, he now believed them guilty of murder, because the supreme court of Illinois had so pronounced them, and that settled it. So well-nigh incredible is it that a man of Henry George's intelligence and boasted mental independence should ever have given utterance to a conclusion so foolish and so slavish that to-day, nine years after the fact, if you venture to attribute it to him in talking with one of his admirers, the chances are ten to one that you will be vehemently told that Mr. George never could have taken, and never did take, such a position, and that you ought to be ashamed of yourself for so misrepresenting a noble man. That there may be no mistake about the matter, then, let me quote his exact words:

> There is no ground for asking executive clemency in behalf of the Chicago Anarchists as a matter of right. An unlawful and murderous deed *was* committed in Chicago the penalty of which, by the laws of the State of Illinois, is death. Seven men were tried on the charge of being accessory to the crime, and, after a long trial, were convicted. The case was appealed to the supreme court of the State of Illinois, and that body, composed of seven judges, removed, both in time and place, from the excitement which may have been supposed to have affected public opinion in Chicago during the first trial, have, after an elaborate examination of the evidence and the law, unanimously confirmed the sentence.
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> *That seven judges of the highest court of Illinois, men accustomed to weigh evidence and to pass upon judicial rulings, should, after a full examination of the testimony and the record, and with the responsibility of life and death resting upon them, unanimously sustain the verdict and the sentence, is inconsistent with the idea that the Chicago Anarchists were condemned on insufficient evidence.*

Unmistakable, is it not? No room for misrepresentation here. So clear is the meaning that every person who read the sentence which I have italicised, and who was capable of judging its author impartially, in his inmost heart put Henry George down as a liar and a coward. Some went farther, I among them, and put him down in print as such. The lamented William Morris, for instance, who was then editing the "Commonweal," found nothing less than capital letters adequate to the branding of George as TRAITOR, in a pithy paragraph of four or five lines, signed, if my memory serves, by the poet himself.

Nine years have passed since then, during which the man thus branded has made no acknowledgment of error, uttered no expression of regret, given no sign of repentance. But meantime significant things have happened. Let us move down a little from the remoter past toward the present.

In the fall of 1892, John P. Altgeld was elected governor of Illinois. In January of 1893 he was inaugurated, and before he had been in office many months he granted what the law calls a pardon to Fielden, Schwab, and Neebe. Governor Altgeld is himself a lawyer. He once held the office of prosecuting attorney, and later was a judge of the superior court of Illinois for a term of five years. Nevertheless, before deciding on this pardon, he called to his side, as trusted friend and counsellor, another judge of one of the high courts of the State. I suppose that I reveal no secret in naming him,—Judge Samuel P. McConnell, of Chicago. Together they went over the record of the famous case. At a certain stage in their examination, or at its end,—I am not sure which,—Judge McConnell said to the governor:

"Though I think that these men should be pardoned, and though I ask you to pardon them, I desire to express to you, as your friend, my conviction that, if you pardon them, you will thereby seriously injure your political future."

"Damn it, Sam!" replied Altgeld, "if these men were unjustly convicted, I'll set 'em free, though it should prove my political death."

And so the pardon issued. It was a long, convincing, bold, and scathing document, probably the most merciless message of mercy ever penned. With unanswerable evidence and argument Governor Altgeld assailed the guilty conspirators against free speech, and, far from bowing to the decree of the Illinois supreme court, he ripped it completely up the back. As a result he has ever since been a target for the abuse and ridicule of the entire capitalistic press. Nearly four years have elapsed since the document was promulgated, during which its author has been careful to improve every opportunity to intensify the hatred of which he is the object among the privileged classes.

And now we come down to the present time. On Saturday evening, October 17, 1896, Governor Altgeld made a notable speech at Cooper Union in this city. The chief objects of this speech were condemnation of government by injunction and demonstration of the fallibility of courts of justice. One minute before the opening of the meeting and the entrance of Governor Altgeld, Henry George crossed the platform and took a conspicuous seat. The Single Taxers present rose to their opportunity, and made the hall ring with their applause. Any other man than Henry George, in a meeting in no sense his, would have acknowledged the greeting with a bow and then steadfastly kept his seat. But not he. Rising and crossing the platform with that pompous strut with which every one who has ever seen him parade before an admiring audience is familiar, he stood at the desk the incarnation of egotism, and with characteristic impudence began a speech. Before he could utter a half-dozen sentences he was cut short in the middle of one of them by the playing of the band in greeting to Altgeld. I confess that I do not like the looks of the Illinois governor. He is distinctly a disappointment to the eye. Yet I could not help contrasting, and greatly to his advantage, this slight figure of a modest, retiring man, free from any trace of vanity and plainly bored by the long-kept-up applause, with the swelling turkey-cock whose strut had just been so ingloriously cut short.

After some introductory speeches, the hero of the evening rose to address the audience. And then was witnessed the astounding spectacle of the man who, nine years before, had given his specific sanction to the legal murder of innocent men, that he might not damage a political future which, though in reality the baseless fabric of a dream, was in his eyes a shining certainty, rising with both hands lifted

in honor of the man who, four years before, without the slightest hesitation and as if the most ordinary decency commanded it, had cast into the balance a political prospect which only the most ambitious of statesmen could have despised, in order to do all that lay within the bounds of human power to right the wrongs of persecuted innocence. An astounding spectacle, I say. Yet it would have been an inspiring one, had those who saw it been able to look upon it as an honest effort at atonement. But such it emphatically was not. It was only too evident that the man who had once endeavored to conceal his infamy behind the extraordinary and pusillanimous plea that a unanimous court can do no wrong was applauding the man who holds no court sacred, not to repudiate his past, but to make the people forget it,—that he had come to Cooper Union not to confess that he had been a coward, but to exploit in his own behalf the bravery of another. In vain did I try to imagine what went on in Henry George's mind as he sat listening to these rebuking words as they fell from the lips of a former occupant of the bench:

> I say to my countrymen that there cannot be in a republic any institution exempt from criticism, and that, when any institution is permitted to assume that attitude, it will destroy republican government. The judicial branch of the government is just as much subject to the criticism of the American people as are the legislative and executive branches . . . . The judges of our federal courts are as honest as other men and no more so. They have the same passions and prejudices that other men have, and are just as liable to make mistakes and to move in the wrong direction as other men are, and the safety of the republic not only permits, but actually requires, that the action of the courts should be honestly and thoroughly scanned and freely criticised . . . . The mere fact that the supreme court has all through its career repeatedly reversed its own decisions shows its fallibility . . . . The decision of the supreme court does not in any case become a rule of political action the correctness of which the the voter dare not question.

As Henry George listened to this simple truth, which the most ordinary mind must accept and which every honest mind openly acknowledges, did he reflect that he had once declared the supreme court incapable of error and its decision beyond question? Probably. It is my belief that he regrets his course in 1887 most bitterly. Not that he is in the least ashamed of it; not that he would not repeat it, if he felt as sure as he did then of a political gain in prospect; but simply that he realizes that he made a fool of himself, not gaining what he hoped to gain, and losing what he now would like to have,—the honor which might have been his, but which another has bravely won.

I have no use for repentance. I regard it a deplorable waste of precious time and valuable material that any man, no matter who, should don sackcloth and ashes. But none the less am I certain that no frank and sincere man, realizing with shame that he has been guilty of an enormous folly in a matter of vital public interest, will neglect for a moment to expose his heart to public view. And the fact that during the last nine years Henry George has sought no opportunity to lay his heart bare assures me that the liar and coward and traitor of 1887 is, in his heart, a liar and coward and traitor still. So that which he refuses to lay bare I strip. The corruption thus made visible is not a pleasant sight, but it is a useful one, and I am determined that it shall never vanish by concealment. My hope, rather, is to fan the flame of a purifying indignation that shall dissipate the pestilence forever.

BENJ. R. TUCKER.

## Principle, Policy, and Politics.

In discussing the question of the attitude of Anarchists when political campaigns are in progress Mr. Yarros does well in insisting on the principal argument that Anarchists, by participation in such campaigns, would impair that force which they aim to exercise in their own distinctive work. But some of his incidental remarks make it necessary for me to add a word. It is true that Anarchists, once convinced that freedom could best be furthered by the use of the ballot, would not deem its use to that end an impropriety. But it seems to me that, in asserting this truth,—which is almost a truism,—Anarchists should be careful to make it plain that to them the use of the ballot is in itself something more and worse than a trivial act of inutility. Mr. Yarros, to be sure, declares parenthetically that use of the ballot is aggression, but certainly the tendency of his article as a whole is to make light of it in its aggressive aspect.

For my part, when I say that I would use the ballot if I thought that thereby I could best help the cause of freedom, I make the declaration in precisely the same sense and with precisely the same conception of the gravity of my utterance as when I declare, as I sometimes do, that I would use dynamite if I thought that thereby I could best help the cause of freedom. But I am as reluctant to use one as the other. If, however, I were to decide to use either or both, I would not try to deceive myself with phrases, or resort to euphemism by talk of stepping-stones, but would base myself, in that matter as in all others, squarely on the excellent doctrine that the end justifies the means,—a doctrine which Mr. Yarros substantially asserts by his article, despite his verbal disclaimer. In declaring that he would vote if absolutely sure that his vote would decide the fate of a libertarian measure,—that is, would commit an aggression,—that is, again, would violate equal liberty,—he surely acts upon the doctrine of "exceptional cases," even though in the same breath he contradicts himself by reiterating that distrust thereof which he has previously expressed in these columns.

His utterances, moreover, are a confession that in practice he would find exceptional cases oftener than I. Which was quite the thing to be expected. It is all a mistake to suppose, as many people do, that one who holds to a doctrine as an absolute moral principle is less likely to depart from it in practice than one who holds to it merely as a generally safe rule of conduct. The first man to be trusted should not be he who declares that it is *always* wrong to lie.

T.

## Five Men in a Forest.

There was once a Good Man who lived all alone in the midst of a great forest. But, since all good men love company, he was very glad to see a Quiet Man coming through the woods toward him. The Good Man cried out: "Come, settle here with me"; and the Quiet Man consented, that he might be less disturbed by wolves. So they lived together very happily, till a Stupid Man came by. They asked him to join the colony; he knew no reason why he shouldn't, and soon proved to be very well worth his keep. Then a Lazy Man came, and was invited in. He accepted, because there was nothing easier to do; and, though his work never paid for his board, he made so much fun that they all were very glad to have him there. And everything went well till a Bad Man appeared.

If they had known who the Bad Man was, they would not have asked him to stay; but he looked like a nice, respectable man, and so he was taken into the colony at once. Then they soon began to have trouble. For the Bad Man had a tremendous appetite for beer, and was all the time brewing and drinking it; and, when he had plenty of beer in his stomach, he did things that were not at all pleasant to the Good Man and the Quiet Man. He also sometimes got the Lazy Man and the Stupid Man to drink with him, and then their company became less desirable.

Seeing this, the Good Man made up his mind that a remedy must be found. So he went to the Quiet Man and said: "The way the Bad Man is carrying on is unendurable. We must have an authority to prohibit him from drinking and making beer." The Quiet Man agreed. Then they sounded the Lazy Man and the Stupid Man, and decided that the proposition could be carried. So they called the settlers together, and the Good Man said:

"Hitherto each of us has done as he chose. But we now see the bad results of allowing one to do what is unpleasant to the others. I move, therefore, that we now establish a government, which shall have power to regulate our lives by the will of the majority."

The Stupid Man seconded this, and it passed unanimously. Then the Quiet Man brought out a draft of a constitution, drawn up by the Good Man; and, after some discussion with the Lazy Man over the wording of the preamble, it was adopted. Then, just as the Good Man was about to move a law against beer, the Bad Man rose and said:

"We have done a good day's work for social progress. To-morrow we can begin enacting laws, and have everything ship-shape. Now we need fish for dinner, and I know where I can get a mess that will break the record, if the Lazy Man and the Stupid Man will go with me. I move to adjourn till to-morrow."

The Lazy Man seconded this at once, and it passed by 4 to 1. The Bad Man and his two companions went off fishing, with big bottles of beer in their pockets, and fished with great success. While they fished, the Bad Man talked to the others most persuasively, and the results of his talk appeared next day. For, as soon as the meeting was called to order, the Bad Man said:

"Now we ought to begin having public business done by public authority. The most important industry of this community is brewing, and, by making this a public charge, we can make beer absolutely free to all who want to drink, which is extremely desirable. I move, therefore, that the Good Man be appointed Chief Brewer, with a salary to be hereafter fixed; that his duty be to provide all the beer that anybody wants; and that, if he fail to do this, he be punished for malfeasance in office."

The Stupid Man seconded this, and moved the previous question; the Lazy Man seconded this, and the motion was put through at once by 3 to 2. Then the Bad Man moved a bill of eighty-nine sections to regulate the currency, and no more public business was done for some months, except to discuss this bill.

The Chief Brewer refused to brew at first, but gave way under the threat of a prosecution for malfeasance. The things that he said when the Bad Man came around to see how the brewing got on may be imagined; but the Bad Man only replied: "This proves what I always suspected,—that you are a lazy fellow at bottom. Your claim to know more than the majority of the voters about what is good for us is just a pretence to get rid of the work of making beer. But it won't do. Next week there is a picnic up at the falls, where we shall want at least twice as much beer as usual; and, if you don't have a sufficient supply ready, you will get just what you deserve for your insubordination to the decrees of the public council." And he went off.

"Ah!" said the Chief Brewer, as he turned away to get his corks ready, "why wasn't I a Wise Man?"

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

## Happiness.

Sought by many, found by few,
From my lap I ever strew
Roses of delight and mirth
On the tide of life on earth.
But mankind rejects my gift,
And imploringly doth lift
Its dim eyes in hope and pride
Unto shadows deified,
Vainly waiting for relief
From its misery and grief.

Me man loves; for me he yearns,
But in stupor often turns
From the path that leads to me,
And my trace he fails to see.
Hollow dreams he doth embrace,
Death and danger he doth face.
Missing life's divinest creed,
Care and worry are the meed
For his days of strife and toil,
For his years of wild turmoil.

In ideals great and sound,
In aspiring I am found.
Courage is the iron shell
In whose vaults I ever dwell.
Justice is the sunny height
On whose summit I alight.
Freedom is the boundless sphere
In whose glory I appear.

Reason, feeling, knowledge, art,—
The devotion of the heart
And the vigor of the mind,
With the soul's pure flame combined,
Are the founts from which I flow,
And the spells through which I grow,
Bringing peace and joy and calm
Unto man, and healing balm.

Seek me not within the skies,
Nor below in fraud and lies.
Seek me not in strife and foes,
Nor in others' tears and woes.
Seek me in the light of truth,
In your love's undying youth.
Seek me in simplicity,
In the world's felicity.

Man engrossed by greed and fame,
Wake from sleep and see thy shame.
Purge thy hands of lucre's mud,
Of thy brothers' sweat and blood.
Cease thy struggles dire and vain,
And thy own true self regain
From destruction's dark abyss
To a simple life of bliss.

Man enraged with war and hate,
Rise serene and just and great
From the swamp where thou hast sunk
With thy own debasement drunk.
Shake the night from off thy soul,
And thy being's farthest goal
Make the sweet and soft caress
Of thy longed-for Happiness.

*Basil Dahl.*

## Land Speculation.

*To the Editor of Liberty:*

As Mr. Yarros's criticism of my article took two months to break the shell, I will be excused if I defer my reply till after the election in Delaware. In the meantime, I will ask Mr. Yarros to explain the economic distinction between economic rent in agricultural districts and in cities, and whether there are other kinds of economic rent in the suburbs or on oyster-beds or mines.

The asseveration that there is no land speculation "worth mentioning" in Germany, Austria, Italy, and other European countries is simply ludicrous, but I suppose that Mr. Yarros will concede that much land is monopolized there, and that, wherever population is increasing, rents advance. The Europeans, then, must be very slow if they do not speculate therein. Nevertheless, I will disprove that asseveration later. The question as to the effects of land monopoly in Ireland is answered in Henry George's pamphlet, "The Land Question"; so I will not spend space upon it here. If Mr. Yarros were familiar with that, he would have learned that M. de Laveleye says (p. 8) "that the Belgian tenant-farmers—for tenancy largely prevails even where the land is most minutely divided—are rack-rented with mercilessness unknown in England, or even in Ireland, and are compelled to vote as their landlords direct." Also that in Mr. Yarros's "peasant proprietary" France, the peasant proprietors boast to one another of the high rents they get, etc. (p. 11; see also p. 10). I will only add that, so strict is the monopoly of land in Ireland that before the famine the cotters often sowed fields with sharp points, so as to injure the pasturing cattle and so force the land-owner to let it for cultivation. Although I have it direct from an Irish landlord, I do not vouch for the statement—because it seems almost incredible—that agricultural land let at "con-acre" for as high as $50 per acre for a year; but it is sure that "agricultural" American land lets for half to a third of the gross crop. That, however, is probably "too insignificant to consider."

For a final joke, Mr. Yarros says that "it is only in new and sparsely-populated countries that speculation in land rages, and in these there is plenty of free land at the disposal of those who are fit for agricultural labor." Does he apply this to South Brooklyn and to the annexed district of New York city? Free land while speculation rages? Is that land worth anything, or will it ever possibly be worth anything? I pause for a reply.

BOLTON HALL.

AUGUST 10, 1896.

[I owe Mr. Hall an apology for delaying the publication of his letter. In the meantime the Single Tax has received much attention in Liberty, which cannot spare quite the whole of its space to that ambitious theory.—EDITOR LIBERTY.]

## Bernard Shaw's Opportunism.

I feel my whole being tremble when I think that the testimony of three men—yes, of three men who make it their business to teach and define—would suffice to give full play to public opinion, to change beliefs and to fix destinies. Will not the three be found?—PROUDHON.

We thought we had found two at least of the three,—one whom I need not name, and G. Bernard Shaw. But it seems we must be content to receive from G. B. S. only the incomparable wit of his dramatic column and the incomparable pathos of his refusal to espouse liberty.

The pneumatic tire of Mr. Shaw's arguments (Liberty, No. 344) has been well punctured by Mr. Yarros (in this discussion Mr. Shaw is also Victor, in the sense that he has gained the most light), but the truly preposterous character of his contentions can be appreciated only when we fish out of the water a few of the many facts which the great critic has thrown overboard with his logic.

Mr. Shaw assures us that we now have liberty and "plenty of it." Let us do Mr. Shaw the kind injustice of assuming that this is not a joke. All the liberty we want! Once upon a time Mr. Shaw wrote: "I am an atheist, free lover, Socialist, and Bohemian. Now, ladies, which of you will have me? Don't all speak at once." Now for a *fact:* how much liberty have the free lover and the atheist to-day? Do we not still have on our statute-books blasphemy laws bigoted enough to imprison every man who denies the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, whenever the mob desire so to do? Have not many earnest men been thus imprisoned in our day? Plenty of liberty—and the only woman in England who has boldly asserted her liberty to love regardless of church and State—Edith Lanchester,—was deprived of all her liberty as being guilty of insanity,—a fate from which she was rescued by the merest chance. What fraction of men and women dare boldly to possess their own bodies at the present day?

So much for the superabundance of liberty with which we are blessed; it is not liberty in a horn of plenty, but simply liberty in a horn.

How far is Mr. Shaw's counsel to throw "Tuckerism" overboard justified even by the somewhat opportunist standard of present tendencies?

The fact is that here in England the "Tuckerites" have good grounds on which to take Blaine's advice to "claim everything" that is worth having. The most widely read of London's evening papers is the "Echo," and its most popular contributor is Major G. O. Warren, who doses its readers daily with heresies *à la* Tucker. That once stanch State Socialist, J. Morrison Davidson, having read "Instead of a Book," yielded to the logic of liberty, and loses no opportunity for sounding its praises and endorsing its teachings. In his regular article in the "Weekly Times and Echo" (which has no connection with the daily evening "Echo") he exercises a great influence among social workers and thinkers. The cry is: Still they come. Even Keir Hardie, and Blatchford, author of "Merrie England," seem to be pointing freedomward, to judge from their vigorous denunciation of the Hyndman-Aveling autocracy in the late London congress. Blatchford never has a kind word for parliaments or parliamentary agitation. Keir Hardie came back from Denver to tell his followers, in the "Labor Leader," that the Tuckerite, Aug. McCraith, was the best-posted man on economics that he had ever met. Mr. Shaw is known as a matchless joker; well, it seems to me that the greatest joke he ever perpetrated is his invitation to the readers of Liberty to leave the Old Guard and unite themselves with the Fabians. I will here make an odious comparison. I begin by assuming that Mr. Shaw may fairly be called the intellectual equal of Mr. Tucker; perhaps the modest editor of Liberty would admit that Mr. Shaw, in some respects, is his superior. I ask myself, then, the reason why Mr. Tucker's sociological studies have achieved so splendid results, while Mr. Shaw's are practically barren,—in this sense, at least, that they have inspired no other writings. I take it to be simply this,—that the one stands on the right platform, the other on the wrong. Few other teachers of our day can show such a host of able and grateful disciples as Yarros, Mackay, "Tak Kak," Tandy, Robinson, Walker, Fulton, the Replogles, the Schumms, Badcock, Byington, Cohen?

Would Mr. Shaw's 25 years of sociological teachings, if collected, make a text-book of opportunism as inspiring and helpful as the Libertarian's *vade mecum*, "Instead of a Book"? Will Mr. Shaw's contributions to sociological thought yield even a fractional part of the clean-cut, error-dispelling definitions which bristle on every page of Liberty's fifteen years' struggle for straight-seeing and clear-thinking? Can Mr. Shaw find 400 men willing to sacrifice from 4 to 400 shillings each for the cream of his sociological writings? Can he find a work equal in ability to Tandy's "Voluntary Socialism" with his name gratefully inscribed on the title-page? Yet it breaks one's heart to think that all these things might have been added unto him if he had but the one thing needful,—the right logical basis. I cannot but think that Mr. Shaw has never fully appreciated the deep saying: "If there were more extremists in evolutionary periods, there would be no revolutionary periods." The real teachers are always extremists and relentless logicians. Half-way men may be needed to do the dirty work of opportunism, but they teach no one, and far oftener hinder terribly the work of the real instructors of mankind.

The great advantage (to some it may seem a disadvantage) of standing on the whole truth is that you can't "wobble," even if you want to. The great disadvantage (to some it may appear an advantage) of standing on something other than the whole truth is that you can't do anything but "wobble." Liberty's essential teaching is the same to-day as it was in the beginning. Standing on the truth, Liberty could not "wobble"; hence the ease with which its teachings were united into one consistent whole. This explains also why the late William Morris did nothing but "wobble" in the whole course of his career. He assumed in rapid succession a whole series of erroneous positions. What an inestimable loss to the world! What a power would William Morris have been, if his sociological teaching had had the intellectual beauty of symmetry, the strength of unity and consistency! In the instructive correspondence between Mr. Shaw and Mr. Hyndman, provoked by the former's comments on the dead poet, Mr. Shaw himself tells us that Morris changed over and over again "from the Social-Democratic Federation under Mr. Hyndman's leadership to the Socialist League under his own; from an attempt to make something out of 'Anti-State Communism' to a decisive rejection of that and every

other variety of Anarchism [?]; from revolutionary Socialism to constitutional Socialism, etc., etc." Able to detect the fatal weakness in each false position he assumed, Morris seemed to despair of finding a true basis for his sociological beliefs, and at last simply dropped indifferently into the swim of State Socialism, which is now, Mr. Shaw says, ultra-respectable in England. Well may Mr. Shaw and autocrat Hyndman quarrel even on the mourners' bench over so splendid a ruin! But it is a most eloquent and instructive ruin for all who have a will and mind to learn. On that mourners' bench let them sit till the hosannas of an exultant and advancing Anarchism shall have power to redeem their lost, wandering, and wobbling souls with that knowledge which is the power of truth unto salvation,—till they shall know that liberty is the mother, and not the daughter, of order, and that ever and only in her high light the world is saved. E. McCALL.

P. S.—The following interesting "straw" has just come to hand. At a largely-attended meeting, held in Bradford, of delegates to the trade union congress in Edinburgh, the opinion was unanimously expressed that it was of the utmost importance that the trade societies should devote more attention to the currency question. To further this end it was suggested that arrangements should be made for addresses to be given to trade societies by workmen who have devoted special study to the subject

## An Ascendency of Money-Bags.

[Newcastle Chronicle, November 3.]

There is something rotten in the state of America. It is not very easy perhaps to suggest with confidence the causes and the remedies; but the present condition of things is the unmistakable indication of some social disease, insidious and dangerous. It seems only the other day that America was still regarded as a land of promise opened to the weary peoples of the old world. The United States was regarded as a land of political freedom and individual independence; the country of peace, plenty, and prosperity; where every man should reap what he should sow, and labor have its own. It is an extraordinary change that has come over that dream. At this very moment we see the great republic, the land of promise, seething with revolutionary discontents from sea to sea. It is an absolute fact that no country in Europe presents us with such an active and envenomed antagonism between classes as we see in the American commonwealth. Instead of fraternity, there are the deepest social divisions that exist anywhere. Instead of equality, we see a more dangerous disparity of classes than existed in France before the Revolution;—we hope we use these words with a due sense of responsibility, believing the thing described to be a fact. European societies have acknowledged for centuries ascendencies of blood, ascendencies of arms, but an open ascendency of money-bags has never yet been acknowledged by a stable society. That is what is the matter with America. Nowhere else in the world is wealth so enormously powerful, so unflinchingly resolute, so utterly heartless. Nowhere else in the world is labor so feverishly eager in its desires, so self-conscious of its status, so rebellious. And there are few places in the world where labor has proved so impotent as in the American republic, whenever it has measured itself against capital in a set struggle. The American republic, whose state of freedom and happiness was wont to be compared by Fourth of July orators with the servility and starvation of the masses in the effete despotisms of Europe, has turned out to be something like a great paradox of politics. Nowhere are the masses so discontented as in America. The measure of our discontent is the measure of our expectations, not of our condition. The Italian and the Russian peasant are accustomed to grinding poverty from the cradle; but they have never compared it consciously with anything better. The greater part of the American people are immeasurably better off than the poorest peoples in Europe; perhaps they are nearly as well off on the whole as the working classes even in England. But they expected something far better. They expected nothing less than the sense of individual independence, and the prospect of a competence. When they realize that they are condemned, in the main, to a struggling existence, and that they are at the mercy of the millionaires in a way to which Europe presents no parallel; when they realize that the golden days of democracy in America seem to be already over, and that life presents to the majority of men its harsh and hopeless side just as in Europe; and when farmers and artisans feel that there is no talisman against disappointment and oppression in the blessed word republic,—they imagine in a vague way that they are defrauded. They do not see a clear way to right themselves, but their temper grows more and more vengeful.

The farmers who went out west, who took land, and built a house and married, had expectations that seem heartbreaking when thought of now. When they brought their wives home, they faced the world in good heart; they dreamed of nothing but industry and prosperity; they were prepared for the hard work, and did not care how hard it might be so long as they should enjoy the fruits of it. Now the greater part of the farmers are mortgaged to the neck. To these the fall in prices means the appreciation of gold. They borrowed when wheat was perhaps twice as high in price as it is now. Like all debtors, they felt sure of paying off every cent in a year or two; but every year prices fell, and every year they found that a larger and larger part of their produce had to go to pay the interest on their debts. They cannot shake off the burden; it grows heavier and heavier, year by year. They regard money as only a means of exchange. They reason that, if they had contracted to pay their debts in kind, they could not possibly have been the victims of such a cheating fate as has overtaken them, and would by now have been prosperous and contented where they are poor and desperate. If these people were idle and feckless, they would deserve no pity, and there would be little to fear from them. But they are a people full of energy and helpfulness. That is what makes them dangerous. Let there be no doubt that the farmers who will vote for Mr. Bryan to-day, in all the western States, are the victims of a slow and invisible, but tremendous, tragedy such as presses the life out of honest hearts. With American artisans the case is not quite so serious. Their wages are higher, on the whole, than wages in England, but their cost of living is greater. Food is cheap, but clothing and other items of domestic expense are dear. Trade for trade, the purchasing power of earnings is probably somewhat less, on the whole, in America than in England. But labor is at once more ambitious, more restless, and more impotent. Capital is able, united, resourceful, omnipotent, and heartless. The Homestead strike, the incidents of the coal wars and railway struggles of recent years, have revealed a state of moral civil war. For trusts, monopolies, syndicates, and rings, money is to be made anyhow. It is to be made honestly, if possible, but money is to be made. There is no nexus of sympathy between employer and employed. There is not even some nexus of traditional class or national feelings, such as play a great part beneath the surface in composing industrial quarrels in England. Here the tendency is to compromise. In America, the temper of the millionaire is apt to be merciless. Men are, in America, to make money: that is the root of the whole trouble. Here, in the old world, nations have grown and struggled into greatness, and some of them, like ourselves, have become very wealthy on the way. But the self-conscious and feverish passion for becoming wealthy has never been the dominant factor in social development. But men have left the old world by millions to be better off in the new. From their birth the majority of the American people have been encouraged to think the United States the best place in the world to make money in. It is maddening to large masses of the American people to see how the system of the republic tends to run to millionaires, while the majority, in trying to save money, must feel doomed to spend their lives

> Dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old in drawing nothing up.

But so far the forces of discontent in America have felt themselves helpless. The evil thing about the situation is that they are conscious of being beaten, not by reason, but by money. If Bryan is doomed to-day, the vast party of discontent in America—consisting as we have said of a great majority of the States, and of nearly a moiety of the population—will be convinced that he has been downed by the most colossal and cynical process of corruption ever known. Once they are convinced that money can buy the presidency, and that reform is impossible,—and it is more difficult in America than anywhere else in the world,—they will face the alternative, which is Revolution. That is the possibility.

## Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, Belvidere, N. J.

☞ For the present the fortnightly supply of targets will be maintained by sending members a special monthly circular, alternating with the issue of Liberty.

Target, section A.—"The Farmers' Voice," 334 Dearborn Street, Chicago, now runs a column entitled "The Farmers' Forum," with the following heading:

**The Farmers' Forum invites communications on all subjects, from whatever point of view. Single-standard men and free silverites, protectionists and free-traders, may here discuss freely the issues in which they are interested, the editor of the "Voice" assuming no responsibility whatever for the ideas expressed. No communication should exceed 300 words in length.**

On Oct. 3 it said editorially:

**The farmers of Saxony have a credit system, or a sort of mutual banking system, which might with great profit be adopted by their American prototypes. It is said to work to the satisfaction of the German agriculturist. That it would be equally practicable and beneficial in its operations here would depend wholly upon the intelligence and honesty with which it was conducted. Certain it is that at the season the farmer most needs help, just when his crops are being harvested and his wish is to hold for a better market, it would prove a boon, if properly conducted.**

**This system is known as the Sachen Landwirthschaftlichen Creditvereins, or the Saxon Land Credit Association. This association, being under control and constant supervision of the government, cannot bring disaster on the people by official dishonesty. As showing the confidence of the Saxons in the association, its mortgage certificates, par value 100 marks, are quoted at 102.65 marks for the 3½ per cent., and 103.80 for the 4 per cent. certificates. In the United States the western and southern farmers, who have put all their money into buying farms and farm implements, have to borrow from $100 to $500 until they can market their crops, and pay a stiff rate of interest.**

**On the Saxon plan, which is somewhat similar to the American savings and loan associations, the capital to start the association is obtained from subscriptions to stock, receiving funds as a savings bank, and generally doing a banking business. Any owner of an estate in the kingdom of Saxony, who is of age, independent, and capable of disposing of his property, and who has not been punished for dishonorable crimes, can apply for membership in the association as an ordinary member. The member may be male or female, corporations, or communities, which are acknowledged to be persons in law. Each member must own at least 100 marks ($23) in the stock of the association. This entitles that member to a loan of 5,000 marks, or $1,550.**

**I believe the above is what encyclopedias describe under the title of "Crédit Foncier." It does not issue any money, but is a sort of mutual insurance of credit to enable its members to borrow ordinary money from ordinary money-lenders at lower interest than would otherwise be paid. For this purpose it is successful. Show how much more the mutual association of credit can accomplish than the Saxon farmers undertake; show the error of looking to government supervision for security.**

Section B.—The "Express," P. O. Box 309, Chicago, prints the following in its issue of October 3:

**Believing, as we do, that a nation of home-owners is to be desired, rather than a nation of landlords and tenants, and believing that an exemption of the home from taxation, to a limited amount, is the true plan by which to encourage the ownership of homes and strike the death-blow to landlordism, we invite correspondents to send us brief articles on the subject It is a question in which a few are taking much interest, but to many it will be entirely new. This matter**

will be made a feature of the "Express" during the coming winter, and, we hope, may lead to an awakening interest on a most essential issue. Whatever there is in the land question relates to the home; and whatever will promote the building up of homes will promote the welfare of the people and the substantial prosperity of the nation. The articles invited on this subject are for the purpose of calling out the best array of arguments possible, and will form the basis for a movement to make "free homes" a political issue at some future time. The articles on this subject must not be sent with a request to return if not published. They may first appear in a book or pamphlet, or may never be used if not meritorious. Our object is to get ideas on the land question from a standpoint but slightly discussed and little understood. The "Socialistic" theories and "Single Tax" have many earnest advocates who will recognize the need of a practical plan, and we hope by this means to prove to every honest seeker after better systems that there is a plan, feasible and perfectly practicable, which will proclaim "death to landlordism," and make a nation of home-owners.

Give the editor your ideas about exempting homes from taxation. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

### The Victory of the Fat.

[Newcastle Chronicle.]

Mr. McKinley's seven millions are the fat kine. Mr. Bryan's six millions are the lean kine. We know what the lean kine do in the end with the fat.


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